

## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **Review of Previous Plans**

*This appendix is provided separately as a PDF attachment to this report.*

# Overview

## Introduction

Pittsburgh Regional Transit's (PRT) Homestead to McKeesport (H2M) project will evaluate the potential for transit service enhancements and pedestrian safety improvements in to evaluate a program of transit service enhancement and pedestrian safety improvements in the corridor extending from Homestead to McKeesport, Pennsylvania. This compilation of actions, studies, and plans will be used as input to inform the project team, the public, and stakeholders of the planning and historical context of the H2M corridor. Additionally, as the H2M project advances one of the top corridor recommendations of PRT's *NEXTransit* Long Range Plan (2021), it is critical that this effort aligns with *NEXTransit*'s values, goals, and objectives.

The materials summarized in this memorandum fall into two categories:

- Plans, Studies, and Guidelines developed by Port Authority of Allegheny County, now Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT)<sup>1</sup>
- Plans and Studies performed by Other Entities

This review of previous plans focused on resources were published by Port Authority/PRT or by planning authorities with jurisdiction within the H2M corridor.

## The H2M Study Area

The H2M study area includes the corridor extending from the south end of the Homestead Grays Bridge and along Eighth Avenue in Homestead and continuing along Pennsylvania Route 837 through Munhall, Whitaker, and West Mifflin to Duquesne and along Pennsylvania Route 148 (Lysle Boulevard in McKeesport) with the terminus at the McKeesport Transportation Center. The corridor encompasses existing and potential walksheds for upgraded and relocated transit stops in support of the H2M project.

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<sup>1</sup> All plans and actions prepared prior to 2022 were under the name "Port Authority of Allegheny County" (Port Authority). In Spring 2022, the Port Authority of Allegheny County began doing business under the name Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT).

## H2M Communities

(Insert map)

## **Timeline of Major Events, Transportation Milestones and Plans in the H2M Corridor**

1700s – Queen Aliquippa, a Seneca, one of the very few women who led a Native American tribe, becomes the first permanent resident at what is now McKeesport

1753 – George Washington visits Queen Aliquippa at the mouth of the Youghiogheny River

1788 – Mifflin Township (named after Pennsylvania's First Governor) created. Over time, the township was reduced in size and became West Mifflin Borough in 1944.

1842 – McKeesport Borough incorporated

1857 – The Pittsburgh and Connellsville Railroad begins operating in McKeesport

1872 – Pittsburgh, Virginia and Charleston Railway built from Fourth Street in Pittsburgh's South Side to Homestead and extended to Monongahela in 1873

1872 – National Tube Works founded in McKeesport. As McKeesport became the largest producer of steel pipes, it was known as "Tube City."

1879 – Carnegie Phipps Company established a glass works factory in Homestead

1880 – Homestead Borough established

1880 – Pittsburgh Bessemer Steel Company opens its first mill in Homestead. It subsequently became the Homestead Works of the United States Steel (U.S. Steel) Corporation.

1886 – A small Bessemer converter shop and a blooming mill to produce rails was established in Duquesne. In 1890, the plant was sold to Andrew Carnegie and became a U. S. Steel mill in 1901.

1890 – The White Electric Traction company begins streetcar service between Duquesne and McKeesport. White Electric Traction subsequently became under control of West Penn Power Company which operated the rail transit line until conversion to bus service in 1938.

1891 – The Cities of Duquesne and McKeesport were incorporated

1892 – Amalgamated Association of Iron & Steelworkers strike against Carnegie Steel Company in Homestead. The union was defeated, which was a major setback to union organizing for decades.

1898 – Carnegie Library of Homestead built in Munhall

1898 – Monongahela Street Railway connected Homestead and Duquesne

1899 – Kennywood Park, built by the Monongahela Street Railway, opens. The Monongahela Street Railway was merged into the Consolidated Traction Company which was merged into Pittsburgh Railways which operated Kennywood for several years until 1906.

1901 – U.S. Steel takes over the Carnegie Steel Company

1901 – Munhall Borough incorporated

1902 – The Consolidated Traction Company, Southern Traction Company, and the United Traction Company merged to become Pittsburgh Railways, the major predecessor transit system to the Port Authority of Allegheny County.

1904 – Whitaker Borough (named for James Whitaker, a pioneer settler) incorporated

1927 – Whitaker Bus Line is authorized to operate between Whitaker and Homestead

1928 – McKeesport – Duquesne Bridge opened

1928 – Pennsylvania Routes 148 and 837 signed

1929 – Duquesne Motor Coach formed to operate service linking Duquesne with Homestead and to a point near Bettis Field in West Mifflin. Service subsequently operated to Dravosburg and McKeesport.

1931 – Whitaker Bus Line becomes the Bamford Brothers Motor Coach Line after receiving permission to operate a line from Homestead into Downtown Pittsburgh. The company, subsequently renamed the Bamford Motor Coach Lines, became one of the larger bus companies acquired by Port Authority.

1934 – The federal Public Works Administration awards Allegheny County approximately \$500,000 to widen Jerome Street (now Lysle Boulevard) to a four-lane road

1936 – Homestead Hi-Level Bridge (now Homestead Grays Bridge), funded through the Public Works Administration, opened

1936 – Pittsburgh Railways' McKeesport car house closed

1937 – Pittsburgh Railways' 98 McKeesport route discontinued

1941-42 – About half of Homestead's population was displaced with expansion of U.S. Steel's Homestead Works. The mill's expansion resulted in 1,036 houses being demolished.

1949 - DeBolt Transit Company was formed after purchasing two routes to Downtown Pittsburgh from Bamford Motor Coach Lines. DeBolt expanded service in 1953 and 1954 from Homestead to Homeville, Skyview Terrace, and Duquesne.

1958 – Pittsburgh Railways Route 68 Homestead-Duquesne-McKeesport streetcar route converted to bus service (now the current 61C route)

1963 – Pittsburgh Railways Route 56, last trolley route serving McKeesport, converted to bus service (similar to the current 56 route)

1964 – The Port Authority of Allegheny County takes over the assets and operations of Pittsburgh Railways, Bamford Motor Coach Lines, DeBolt Lines, and Duquesne Motor Coach

1975 – Port Authority begins sponsorship of the PATrain commuter rail service linking Pittsburgh with McKeesport and Versailles operated by the Baltimore & Ohio/Chessie System.

1981 – McKeesport Transportation Center opens

1984 – U.S. Steel closes its Duquesne Works, once one of the largest and most advanced steelmaking operations in the world

1986 – U.S. Steel closes its Homestead Works

1989 – Port Authority replaces the PATrain with three bus routes.

1991 – City of Duquesne designated a financially distressed municipality

1993 – Port Authority enacts service reductions in the Monongahela Valley including several routes which served the H2M corridor

1999 – The Waterfront shopping center development opens on former U.S. Steel Homestead Works site

2007 – Due to unresolved financial challenges, Port Authority implemented a 15% systemwide service cut. Four routes serving the H2M corridor were discontinued.

2007 – Duquesne High School closes with students sent to adjoining school districts.

2009 – Port Authority completes its Transit Development Plan (TDP). Initial implementation of the TDP results in significant route consolidation and discontinuance of routes serving the H2M corridor.

2011 – As Port Authority was unable to secure dedicated state funding, another round of 15% systemwide service reductions was implemented. Six routes serving the H2M corridor either had service reduced or were discontinued.

2013 – Completion of the Great Allegheny Passage trail

2017 – Modernization of McKeesport Transportation Center begins with demolition of the original transit center building.

2022 – Modernized McKeesport Transportation Center opens.

2022 – *Walk Bike Ride McKeesport*, McKeesport's active transportation plan completed.

2023 – Steel Valley Plan for the Boroughs of Homestead, Munhall and West Homestead under development.

### **Summary of Actions, Plans, and Studies in H2M Corridor**

#### **Pittsburgh Regional Transit**

##### **1971 - Commuter Rail Study**

Port Authority conducted a study to determine the feasibility of maintaining commuter rail service operated by the Baltimore and Ohio (B & O) Railroad and expanding commuter rail service into four other corridors. At the time of the study, the B & O Railroad was operating service from Downtown Pittsburgh to McKeesport and Versailles. Stations were located in Downtown Pittsburgh, Hazelwood, Glenwood, Braddock, McKeesport, and Versailles. During the decade prior to the study, the B & O reduced service, closed stations and, through McKeesport, shifted railroad operations from its own line to the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie (P & LE) Railroad. The study recommended expansion of service on the existing route and extension of service on the P & LE to Glassport and Elizabeth. Provision of commuter rail service in the other three corridors was not recommended. This study appears to have led to Port Authority sponsorship

for the Pittsburgh – McKeesport – Versailles commuter rail service. The service was never extended to Glassport and Elizabeth.

At the time of the study, the station serving McKeesport was located along the P & LE Railroad west of Coursin Street and behind (north of) Eat n' Park. However, planning was underway for a new transportation terminal which would include a new commuter rail station, bus layover facilities and commuter parking. This facility would be located to the east between Huey and St. Clair Streets. The McKeesport Transportation Center, incorporating these elements was later constructed on this site.

### **1975 – PATrain**

On February 1, 1975, following several years of negotiations with B & O, Port Authority began sponsoring commuter rail service in the Pittsburgh – McKeesport – Versailles corridor. Designated as the PATrain, service was increased and passenger cars and locomotives were ordered to supplement and eventually replace the older B & O equipment.

Initially, ridership increased in response to the service improvements and new equipment. However, as the decline in heavy industry continued in the 1970s and accelerated during the following decade, population in the communities served by the PATrain fell and ridership sharply decreased. Delays and slow speeds resulting from poor track conditions and freight train interference further discouraged usage. On April 28, 1989, Port Authority discontinued the PATrain, replacing it with new express bus service operating on the 58C, 58P and 58V routes.



Source: David Wohlwill

## 1981 McKeesport Transportation Center

On December 21, 1981, Port Authority opened the McKeesport Transportation Center along Lysle Boulevard between Huey and St. Clair Streets. The transportation center included a platform to serve the PATrain, a bus layover area, bus passenger boarding areas, an interior waiting room and a 32-space park-and-ride facility. During the following year, Amtrak's *Capitol Limited* train began stopping at the McKeesport Transportation Center. It was a major transit hub for the Mon Valley where intercity, regional, and local public transportation services connected with each other.



Source: Hikki Nagasaki, Trainweb.com



Source: David Wilson on Flickr

## **1993 Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway Extension Planning Analysis/Environmental Assessment**

During the early 1990s, Port Authority conducted planning and environmental studies for a 2.3-mile extension of the Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway from its existing terminus in Wilkinsburg to a new terminus at the Swissvale/Rankin border. This was designated as the Phase 1 Extension. The *Planning Analysis/Environmental Assessment* also considered Phase 2 extensions to Pitcairn Borough and McKeesport. The latter extension would cover a distance of 7.5 miles along the Conrail (now Norfolk Southern), Union Railroad, and P & LE RR (now CSX) lines to McKeesport. The cost estimate for the Phase 2 extension to McKeesport was \$100.7 million. Ridership forecasts projected an additional 2,300 weekday riders over the Phase 1 extension to Swissvale. Although inclusion of the Phase 2 extension would result in an overall lower cost-effectiveness for the project, the study recommended further evaluation of an extension beyond Swissvale.

## **2003 - Eastern Corridor Transit Study**

The Eastern Corridor Transit Study (ECTS), conducted by Port Authority, in partnership with the Westmoreland County Transit Authority (WCTA) and the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), evaluated major transit investments in several corridors in Allegheny County's eastern sector between the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers as well as in western Westmoreland County. On-street bus rapid transit, busway, light rail transit (LRT), and commuter rail were among the modes considered. Two alternatives extending to the H2M Corridor were recommended for advancement as medium priorities:

- A Spine Line Corridor alternative proposed the Spine Line extension from Downtown through the Hill District to Oakland, Hazelwood, and the Homestead/Waterfront Area. The capital cost estimate was \$1.892 Billion. The high capital cost is attributable, in part, to a long section of subsurface alignment. The weekday ridership estimate was 35,700. The ECTS recommended advancing this proposal into the Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) phase.
- A Monongahela Valley Corridor alternative (which also included a branch to Etna) would extend from Downtown through the Strip District and then continue south through Oakland and Hazelwood then follow Second Avenue and the CSX railroad line to Glenwood, Rankin, Braddock, and McKeesport. The capital cost estimate for the alternative was \$1.1 billion (the McKeesport branch accounted for \$804.7 million of that amount). The weekday ridership estimate for the McKeesport branch was 19,800. The ECTS recommended advancement of the Etna Branch into the AA/DEIS phase, but proposed inclusion of the McKeesport branch into a future study for the Spine Line to Homestead project.

## **2006 - Eastern Corridor Transit Transitional Analysis to Locally Preferred Alternatives**

The Eastern Corridor Transit Study Transitional Analysis to Locally Preferred Alternatives (ECTS-TA) was sponsored by the SPC, Westmoreland County Transit Authority (WCTA), Allegheny County, and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to advance the results of the 2003 ECTS toward

implementation of one or more transit investments. The ECTS-TA updated the ECTS capital cost estimates for the alternatives and completed public outreach.

The Spine Line to Homestead alternative capital cost estimate was revised to \$2 – \$2.4 billion. The Mon Valley Light Rail capital cost estimate was revised to \$930 million to \$1,100 million for the McKeesport Branch. In the set of priority recommendations, the ECTS-TA included only the Downtown – Oakland corridor, but no investment in a transit connection to the H2M corridor.

## **2007 - Service Reductions**

Due to unresolved financial challenges, Port Authority enacted a 15% systemwide service cut. The following routes serving the H2M corridor were discontinued:

- 50B Glassport – Clairton
- 60E White Oak – Grandview (Saturdays)
- 60M McKeesport – East Pittsburgh (Sundays)
- F Homestead Park – Lincoln Place

## **2009 – Transit Development Plan**

In 2007 – 2009, Port Authority undertook its first comprehensive operations analysis, known as the Transit Development Plan (TDP). The TDP was a comprehensive examination of the Port Authority's existing transit network and an evaluation of new service options intended to revitalize the Port Authority's bus service. The goals were to make service better match demand, to make it simpler, faster, more direct, and to implement innovative practices and services. The TDP also considered better integrating bus service with the rail system and with the region's other transit operators. These changes were proposed to provide better service for existing riders, attract new riders, and improve the economic efficiency and service effectiveness of the system. The improvements would be made with existing financial resources. No new funding was assumed.

Detailed route evaluations were performed for all of Port Authority's 183 routes. For almost every route, recommendations were made for changes in alignment and service levels. Many routes were recommended for consolidation with other routes and several were proposed for discontinuance.

The following routes serving the H2M corridor were changed in accordance with the TDP recommendations:

- 51E Camp Hollow – discontinued due to low ridership and duplication of portions of other routes
- 53F Homestead – Lincoln Place – replaced by 53L Homestead Park Limited with addition of Sunday service
- 53H Homestead – Duquesne via Homeville – replaced by 52 Homeville with addition of Saturday service
- 55B Homeville – Replaced with 52L Homeville Limited with discontinuance of Saturday service
- 55D West Run-Brierly Lane – Discontinued due to low ridership
- 55E Whitaker - West Mifflin – Discontinued due to very limited service and duplication with the 59A West Mifflin – North Versailles route
- 55M Century III Mall – Replaced by 55 Jefferson

- 56B Hazelwood – Replaced by 57 Hazelwood
- 56C McKeesport - Lincoln Place – Replaced by 56 Lincoln Place
- 58C McKeesport Express, 58P Port Vue - Liberty Express, and 58V Versailles Express – Consolidated into the new P7 McKeesport Flyer route
- 59U South Side Works - Oakland - Waterfront – Oakland - Homestead - Waterfront portion of the route replaced by 61C McKeesport and 61D Murray routes.
- 59A West Mifflin - North Versailles – Replace with 59 Mon Valley
- 60A Walnut - Avondale and 60K Crawford Village – Consolidated and replaced with 60 Walnut-Crawford Village
- 60B Jenny Lind and 60E White Oak – Consolidated and replaced with 61 White Oak
- 60M East Pittsburgh-McKeesport and 60P Port Vue - Liberty – Consolidated and replaced with 62 Liberty - North Versailles
- 60S Crawford Village - Jenny Lind – Weekend-only service replaced by 60 Walnut-Crawford Village on Saturdays with Sunday service discontinued

## 2011 Service Reductions

As Port Authority was unable to secure dedicated state funding, another round of 15% systemwide service reductions was implemented. Much of the service reductions involved consolidation of routes. The following routes serving the H2M corridor were affected:

- 52 Homestead replaced with 52L Homestead Limited with peak period only service
- 53 Homestead Park – Weekday service reduced and Sunday/holiday service discontinued
- 55 Jefferson – Route discontinued (Service subsequently reinstated as 55 Glassport)
- 60 Walnut - Crawford Village – Saturday service discontinued (subsequently reinstated)
- 61 White Oak – Route discontinued
- 62 Liberty - North Versailles – Route discontinued

## 2016 - Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Guidelines

Port Authority issued its *Transit-Oriented Development Guidelines* in April 2016. The *Guidelines* describe the PRT's goals for TOD and the principles that determine quality TOD projects. The *Guidelines* analyzed all 76 fixed-guideway stations and categorized them into six TOD types based on density and mix of jobs and homes within each station area. The six types are: Suburban Neighborhood, Transit Neighborhood, Urban Neighborhood, Suburban Employment, Urban Mixed Use, and Downtown. The *Guidelines* provide the following principles to be considered at Urban Mixed Use stations which could be applicable to Eighth Avenue in Homestead:

### Multimodal Connections

- Provide clear connections to on-street transit
- Connect to or enhance the bicycle network
- Incorporate car share and bike share connections
- Provide appropriate low levels of parking

### Walkability

- Provide key pathways to increase connectivity
- Create and maintain public space

- Connect developments to pedestrian uses
- Provide infrastructure to encourage visible, comfortable walking

#### Development Highlights

- 3-9 stories
- 70-100% lot coverage
- Multi-family or townhouses
- Building design should support and encourage street-level activity

#### Keys to Success

- Reduce residential and commercial parking
- Optimize street level relationships between development and public realm.

Additionally, the Guidelines specifically identify affordable housing as being an important consideration for TOD in Allegheny County.

### **2019 – First and Last Mile Program Plan**

PRT's *First and Last Mile Program Plan* focuses on the part of transit trips that go beyond the transit station or stop, where people rely on walking, biking, or driving to complete their journeys. The *Plan* aims to increase ridership, promote non-single occupancy vehicle access, and improve access to those who most depend on it based on clear criteria such as station context, equity, and user experience.

The three goals of the First and Last Mile (FLM) program are to:

- Increase transit ridership,
- Promote non-single occupancy vehicle access to transit, and
- Improve access to transit for those most likely to depend on it.

Increasing ridership is a determining factor in the success and financial sustainability of PRT. Promoting 2+ occupant vehicle access to PRT service helps neighborhoods make the best use of limited space and promotes sustainable, transit-friendly communities. Lastly, improving access for those most likely to depend on it aligns with PRT's equity goal, as outlined in the PRT's 2017 *Transit Service Guidelines*.

Although the guidelines are oriented towards busway and light rail transit stations, the FLM strategies are applicable to planning for access to bus stops in the H2M corridor. The FLM Toolbox is organized along five categories including pedestrian, bicycle, transit, drop-off, and park-and-ride. Different strategies are identified for each category. For pedestrians, the strategies focus on minimizing crossing distances, clarifying locations, connecting and lighting sidewalks and walkways, and providing way-finding. For cyclists, the focus is on dedicated bike lanes, secure bike parking, and expanded bike sharing. For transit, the focus is on dedicated right-of-way, transfer processes, and on-street bus stop comfort.

### **2019 - Transit Service Standards**

PRT regularly updates its Transit Service standards or guidelines to ensure quality transit that is efficient, effective, and equitable. The 2019 version currently serves as a framework for improving transit operations based on standards that help set service goals, design service, establish minimum performance

and evaluate it, and prioritize future plans. Part of the standards focus on stop spacing along fixed-route transit that balances convenience and speed with the number and location of stops.

Table 1: Stop Spacing (in feet)

	High Population Density		Low Population Density
	Minimum Spacing	Spacing Guideline	Spacing Guideline
<b>Rapid Routes</b>	1,000	2,600   $\frac{1}{2}$ mile	2,600   $\frac{1}{2}$ mile
<b>Commuter Routes</b>	650	1,300   $\frac{1}{4}$ mile	1,300   $\frac{1}{4}$ mile
<b>Local and Coverage Routes</b>	650	900   $\frac{1}{6}$ mile	1,300   $\frac{1}{4}$ mile

*Note: For purposes of these standards, high density is considered greater than or equal to 5,000 persons (jobs + residents) per square mile, and low density is considered less than 5,000 persons per square mile.*

These bus stop spacing standards will guide decisions on bus stop relocations and consolidations in the H2M corridor.

## 2021 – NEXTransit Long Range Plan

Completed in September 2021, *NEXTransit* is a community-driven plan that identifies the transit priority projects for the next 25 years built on equity, accessibility, economic and social mobility, safety, resiliency, and accountability. Projects focus on upgrading existing transit infrastructure and adding new transit hubs and corridors to respond to evolving technology, land-use, and climate change patterns.



Source: NEXTransit

*NEXTransit*'s fourth ranked project is Homestead to McKeesport Upgraded Transit, designated as "Corridor R" in the plan. It is classified as an "Essential Expansion" to improve the quality of service in a corridor with high-need populations and is the location of major destinations in the Monongahela Valley. *NEXTransit* notes that Homestead should be considered as a location for a major transit center at one end of the corridor along with the recently modernized McKeesport Transportation Center at the opposite end of the corridor.

## **2022 – Modernized McKeesport Transportation Center Opened**

Along with changes to and reductions in Port Authority service to McKeesport, most notably the replacement of the PATrain with bus service and consolidation of McKeesport local transit services, the McKeesport Transportation Center became oversized in relation to the existing service. Additionally, it was not adequately maintained and fell into disrepair. The interior waiting room was closed to transit riders. However, with the opening of Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway Extension in 2003, faster transit service between Downtown Pittsburgh and McKeesport was implemented. Heritage Community Initiatives began new transit service which replaced some of the service cut by Port Authority. The proximity of the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail (completed in 2013) to the McKeesport Transportation Center highlighted the need to reinforce intermodal connections at this location.

On the other side of the CSX railroad line from the McKeesport Transportation Center, is the former National Tube Works which was acquired by and redeveloped by the Regional Industrial Development Corporation (RIDC). Several businesses and organizations have moved into repurposed industrial buildings and as well as into new structures on the site. Investment was made in the remaining tube production facility. Maintaining the McKeesport transit hub was viewed as supporting continued redevelopment of the RIDC site.

Port Authority demolished the original McKeesport Transportation Center and replaced it with a smaller, modernized facility which opened in March 2022. The capacity of the park and ride lot was expanded to 85 spaces and the tarmac was reconfigured to better facilitate bus operations and accommodate the current vehicle mix. Wayfinding signage directing cyclists to the GAP trail was installed. As of May 2023, McKeesport Transportation Center has the following transit services:

### Local/Monongahela Valley Service

- 55 Glassport (connects to other Monongahela Valley communities)
- 59 Mon Valley (connects to other Monongahela Valley communities)
- 60 Walnut – Crawford (McKeesport local route)
- ACCESS Transportation Systems (paratransit for seniors and riders with disabilities)
- Heritage Community Initiatives (Non-PRT service connecting to other Mon Valley areas)

### Regional Service to Pittsburgh

- 56 Lincoln Place (Local route linking Penn State Allegheny campus, McKeesport, West Mifflin, Hazelwood, and Downtown Pittsburgh)
- 61C McKeesport (local route linking McKeesport, Homestead, Oakland, and Downtown Pittsburgh)
- P7 McKeesport Flyer (Weekday, peak period express route operating on the East Busway to Downtown Pittsburgh)



Source (all three photos): Pittsburgh Regional Transit

# Plans, Studies, and Actions by Other Entities

## **1910 – The Pittsburgh Transportation Problem**

City of Pittsburgh

In this 1910 Pittsburgh transportation report, the transit problem was mainly one of workers commuting to work in the morning and returning home in the evenings. The premise called for these two peak hours as the ones to design for with a focus on radii of service from the business center. In this sense, Pittsburgh lent itself quite naturally to a radial network because downtown was so clearly placed at the center.

A map on page 35 shows the alignments of Pittsburgh Railways' electric transit lines serving Homestead, Munhall, West Mifflin, Duquesne, and McKeesport. These routes are the early twentieth century predecessors of PRT's current service. A map after page 86 shows a Pennsylvania Railroad line along the Route 837 corridor with stations at Homestead, Munhall, Green Springs (West Mifflin), Oliver (Duquesne,) and Cochran (Duquesne). The map also includes the B & O and P & LE railroad lines to McKeesport.

## **1923 – Transit: A Part of The Pittsburgh Plan**

Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh

In September 1923, the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh analyzed the current conditions of transit in the city and identified rapid transit as an “unavoidable necessity” for the city. The document includes several regional maps showing Pittsburgh and its vicinity, including Homestead, Munhall, Whitaker, West Mifflin, and Duquesne with a focus on areas served by streetcar lines, population densities around these lines, and daily flow of street cars and transit lines with quarter mile and half mile walksheds.

## **1923 – Railroads of the Pittsburgh District: A Part of The Pittsburgh Plan**

Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh

In September 1923, the Citizens Committee on City Plan of Pittsburgh analyzed the current conditions of railroad track routes, operations, and facilities in the Pittsburgh District. Although most of this evaluation focused on freight traffic, there is a chapter on passenger service whose key recommendation is a new union station served by the four railroads operating passenger service at the time. A map of train routes serving the new union station (never built) shows 30 daily passenger trains on the Pennsylvania Railroad line paralleling Route 837, 16 passenger trains on the P & LE Railroad line passing through Homestead and McKeesport, and 28 passenger trains on the B & O railroad line serving McKeesport. Although the map does not indicate which trains are local/commuter services and which are long-distance trains (which would have not served the H2M communities), it is assumed that the majority of service is local/suburban. A map of freight train volumes shows that the Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad (now CSX) and Pennsylvania Railroad (now Norfolk Southern) lines through Homestead were among the busiest in the Pittsburgh area as they are now.

## **1956 – Future Homestead Master Plan**

Borough of Homestead

This master plan emphasized traffic flow on Eighth Avenue. Off-street parking would be accommodated in a large structure along Seventh Avenue. The building would also be designed to include retail and office

development. The *Plan* predicted an increase in automobile usage due to convenience and decline in mass transit usage to access shopping. The lack of parking in Homestead was viewed as a major reason for people going to shopping centers which did have sufficient parking.

Highlights from the plan included:

- Parking meter revenues contribute to 5.6% of Homestead's budget
- Spaces for 1,120 cars in Homestead business district
- "Parking facilities should be planned with an eye to eliminating street parking as well as increasing business. Since Eighth Avenue is a main artery of Allegheny County, it should be arranged so that a time will come when there will have to be no parking on this street."
- A 2,300-space parking garage with a shopping center above was proposed for the area between Sixth and Eighth Avenues and West Street and McClure Street. Businesses would have faced Seventh Avenue (which would pass through the development). The development could have also included offices and a new public auditorium.
- All left turns at Eighth Avenue and High-Level Bridge would have been prohibited. A through traffic artery was proposed to be built above Tenth Avenue
- "Low rental" apartment complex was proposed to the east between McClure and City Farm Lane

### **1994 – Homestead Hi-Level Bridge Access Study**

(Sponsoring organization unknown)

The report for this study proposed constructing the West Fifth Avenue ramp to accommodate three lanes of traffic (eastbound dual right turn lanes onto the Homestead Grays Bridge toward Homestead and one westbound lane entering the Waterfront) and signalizing the intersection of West Fifth Avenue/Sandcastle Drive and Waterfront Drive. It also proposed leaving the East Fifth Avenue Ramp as bi-directional traffic facility with one lane in each direction. Ultimately, the West Fifth Avenue Ramp was constructed to provide two lanes entering Waterfront Drive with one lane leaving towards the bridge.

### **1997 – Waterfront Traffic Impact Study**

(Sponsoring entity unknown)

The report for this study proposed the widening of Amity Street to provide four lanes of travel (two lanes in each direction). It also proposed changing the East Fifth Avenue ramp from bidirectional to one-way traffic, towards the Homestead Grays Bridge. This report also proposed the construction of a new access point, the West Bridge, which would have connected Waterfront Drive near Sandcastle to the intersection of Seventh Avenue and Eighth Avenue in West Homestead. The East Fifth Avenue ramp was changed from bi-directional traffic to two lanes of one-way westbound traffic with dual right turn lanes at the Homestead Grays Bridge. The proposed Amity Street improvements were implemented. The West Bridge proposal was advanced to 30% design, but was not constructed.

### **2001 – Comprehensive Plan for the Borough of Homestead**

Homestead Borough

As part of the comprehensive plan, Homestead identified its main transportation access issues and problem areas, which consisted of the following:

- Most streets were in good condition, however both Sixth Avenue and Grandview Avenue are considered “notably deficient” streets
- Traffic counts have not been undertaken since the opening of The Waterfront and were in need of being updated to reflect changes and increases in traffic circulation
- The abundance of truck traffic on Eighth Avenue caused problems including congestion, noise, and reduced safety
- Many of the intersections on Eighth Avenue were frequently congested
- Access to The Waterfront was limited
- Pedestrian access to The Waterfront at McClure and Hays streets was dangerous. Pedestrians had to cross railroad tracks and overcome other physical obstacles.
- Meters including time limits and costs were not consistent throughout the district
- All of the transportation related recommendations from the Borough’s *Comprehensive Plan* were intended to achieve one goal, which is to “Ensure a coordinated circulation system that enables the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.”

Recommendations pertaining to the H2M corridor are:

- Implement a bus or trolley loop system to shuttle employees and shoppers between Eighth Avenue and The Waterfront
- Develop new bus stops and shelters along Eighth Avenue
- Improve pedestrian access ways located mid-block between Seventh and Eighth Avenues
- Assess the feasibility of constructing a pedestrian bridge over the railroad tracks at the northern terminus of McClure Street to permit safe access to The Waterfront
- Eliminate on-street parking on Amity, Ann, McClure, and Hays streets between Sixth and Seventh avenues and providing adequate off-street public parking in the 300 block of Seventh Avenue and on Ninth Avenue
- Designate a north-south traffic route from Munhall Borough through Homestead to the Waterfront

## **2002 – The Citizens’ Plan: An Alternative to the Turnpike Commission’s Plan to Complete the Mon-Fayette Toll Road**

Citizens for Pennsylvania’s Future

In January 2002, Citizens for Pennsylvania’s Future (PennFuture) assembled a group of national and local experts (engineers, architects, and planners) as well as interested citizens to propose an alternative to the Mon-Fayette Expressway. After touring the Monongahela Valley, its major arterial roads, town centers and former industrial sites, the group gathered to brainstorm possible solutions that would meet the region’s transportation and traffic needs, revitalize brownfields, and strengthen communities, while avoiding the harmful environmental and economic impacts that would be caused by the new expressway.

The *Citizens’ Plan* provided an analysis of the alternatives that the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission would not adequately consider and proposed to meet the combined transportation needs of the Monongahela Valley through three major components:

- A 62-mile network of urban boulevards within the Monongahela Valley that would enhance safety and create incentives for economic redevelopment of existing town centers and brownfields;
- Improved connections to interstate highways which will have increased the mobility of vehicles that transport goods from the Valley to outside markets; and

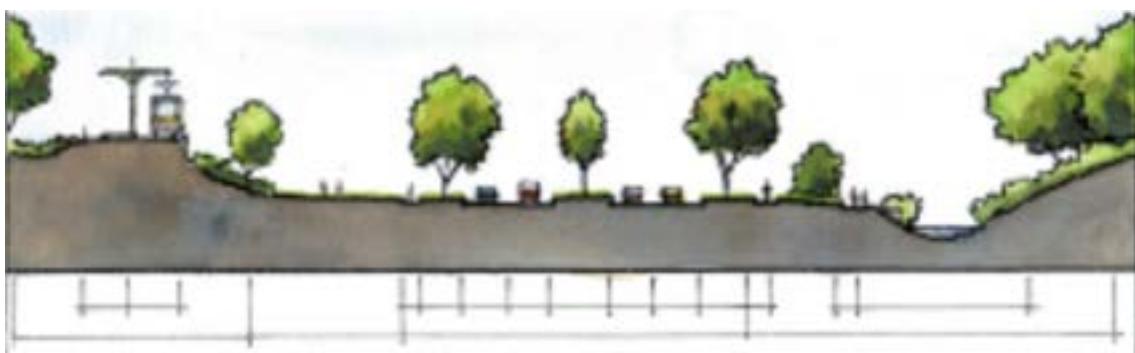
- Three major new transit investments that would have reduced traffic congestion and increase real estate values in the Mon Valley.

The benefits of this plan over the toll road included:

- Substantial investment in the deteriorated roads and infrastructure of Monongahela Valley communities;
- Direct connections to and among brownfield redevelopment sites and existing urban centers, providing better incentives for economic development;
- A balance in achieving improved mobility and safety and enhanced access to Monongahela Valley communities;
- Better traffic management by providing commuters with more choices in reaching employment and education centers;
- Increased real estate values within established communities;
- Less sprawl, thereby preserving the region's forests, streams, hillsides, and farms; and
- A better balance between the potential for economic development of the riverfronts and sustaining their recreational value.

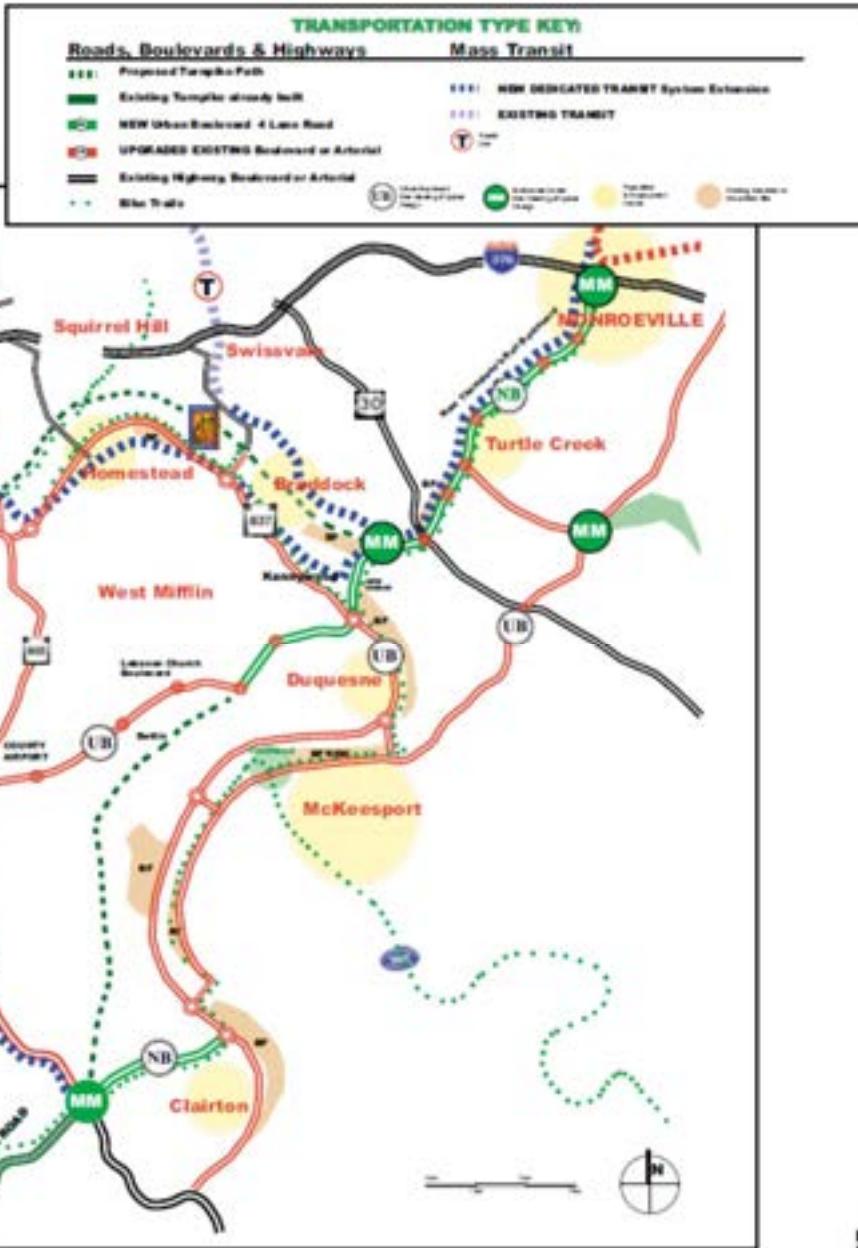


Urban Boulevard with Transit



Cross Section of Urban Boulevard with Transit

## THE CITIZENS' PLAN



Map of *Citizens' Plan* Proposed Transportation Improvements

The total costs of the road improvement portion of the *Citizens' Plan* were estimated to be nearly \$1.2 billion, less than two-thirds of the cost estimate for the Mon-Fayette Expressway.

The *Plan* proposed major transit system improvements such a new Spine Line light rail transit (LRT) line from Downtown Pittsburgh to Oakland to Hazelwood to Homestead to West Mifflin and ultimately crossing over the Monongahela River to Braddock. Another LRT extension would have connected the existing South Hills LRT system to the Century III Mall. The *Plan* also proposed extending the East Busway from Swissvale to Braddock/East Pittsburgh to Monroeville.

In addition, the *Citizens' Plan* called for several multi-use terminals at key junctures: Downtown Pittsburgh, Century III, Braddock, Monroeville, and, potentially, the Large community in Jefferson Hills. At these stations, commuters would be able to transfer from their cars to transit or, in some cases, from one mode of transit to another. These multi-use centers would also serve as centers for commercial development, such as shopping, restaurants, and entertainment.

The *Plan* proposed a 62-mile network of urban boulevards within the Monongahela Valley which will encourage economic redevelopment of existing town centers and brownfields. There would be 52 miles of arterial roads rebuilt as a network of urban boulevards. Additionally, nearly 10 miles of new roads would be built, also to urban boulevard standards (four-lane divided roads with left-turn lanes at intersections, upgraded traffic signals, refurbished sidewalks and street lighting). This would provide convenient routes among local communities as well as opportunities to improve local infrastructure such as sewer and water lines, problem intersections, poorly planned entrances and exits to roadside businesses, and inadequate street lighting. Together, these investments would improve traffic flow and safety and make these communities attractive to new investment. The Mon-Fayette Expressway would either bypass these communities or cut them in half, in some cases with a 60-foot high flyover, leaving existing connector roads in the same decaying state as they are in today.

Within the H2M corridor, the following two arterials would be upgraded to urban boulevards:

- Route 837 from Clairton through Duquesne, Homestead, and the South Side
- Route 148 from the Mansfield Bridge through McKeesport and East McKeesport

Additionally, a new seven-mile urban boulevard, would be constructed on new right-of-way from Lebanon Church Road across a new river crossing at Duquesne through Turtle Creek to Monroeville.

#### Route 837 Corridor: All Communities

Communities along the Route 837 corridor would benefit in several ways from the *Citizens' Plan*. Route 837 would be upgraded to an urban boulevard making this Monongahela Valley main street much more efficient. Depending on the need and location, lanes would be added and existing pinch points at railroad crossings, bridges and river edges would be eliminated by redesigned sections of road over the tracks and side roads. Slow moving trucks would not back up traffic.

A reduction of driveways to businesses would increase traffic speed and improve safety. A Route 837 urban boulevard would connect to other urban boulevard upgrades at Clairton, McKeesport, Duquesne, at the Glenwood Bridge and in Pittsburgh's South Side neighborhood. These improvements would improve access to Interstates 376 and 70, improve travel to the employment centers of downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland and would provide faster connections among Valley communities. A more efficient road would not only reduce commuting time, but would also make the communities along Route 837 more accessible and thus more attractive to investors.

#### Route 837 Corridor: Duquesne/West Mifflin

There would be no widening of Route 837 in Duquesne since it currently has four lanes. However, speeds and safety would be improved by reconfiguring some of the side streets that now have direct connections to Route 837 to use Grant Street, which may be reconstructed with a grade-separated interchange with Route 837. This improved access also would make RIDC's Duquesne City Center more attractive to investors. In the West Mifflin/Kennywood section, the efficiency of Route 837 would be improved by eliminating most of the unsafe driveways, thus improving speed and safety.

#### Route 837 Corridor: Homestead

The upgraded road would benefit Homestead by providing opportunities for both the traffic destined to residences in the community and retail opportunities along Eighth Avenue. This would have been provided with improved access to the Waterfront from Route 837 at the up-river end and by extending Waterfront Drive to reconnect with Route 837 behind Sandcastle. By reducing through traffic on Eighth Avenue, this approach would have supported efforts to revitalize it as a community main street.

#### Route 148

Between the Mansfield Bridge and the Jerome Street Bridge over the Youghiogheny River, Route 148 would be upgraded to an urban boulevard permitting more efficient flow of traffic in this corridor. The existing roadway (Lysle Boulevard) through the commercial section of McKeesport would remain but signal synchronization and plantings would increase the efficiency and attractiveness of this section. North of the McKeesport-Duquesne Bridge widening and elimination of some points of access to Route 148 would be necessary to improve this section to urban boulevard standards.

#### New Urban Boulevard along Thompson Run

Between the intersection of Lebanon Church Road and Buttermilk Hollow Road in West Mifflin and Interstate 376 in Wilkins a new road would be constructed to urban boulevard standards. This would follow the Thompson Run Valley both sides of the Monongahela River. This urban boulevard would be built at ground level thus permitting more local access for communities such as Turtle Creek. This boulevard would also provide excellent access to Keystone Commons. A new four-lane bridge would be built over the Monongahela River at Duquesne.

### **2003 – Twin Rivers Council of Governments Comprehensive Plan**

Twin Rivers Council of Governments

The Twin Rivers Council of Governments (TRCOG), undertook the *Twin Rivers Council of Governments Comprehensive Plan* which covers Elizabeth Borough, Elizabeth Township, Forward Township, Glassport Borough, Liberty Borough, Lincoln Borough, Madison Borough, McKeesport City, Port Vue Borough, South Versailles Township, Versailles Borough, West Mifflin Borough, West Newton Borough, and White Oak Borough. With respect to transportation, the *Plan* stated:

- The Mon-Fayette Expressway project was the solution to the communities' access problems,
- TRCOG and the *Comprehensive Plan* were fully supportive of the Mon-Fayette project,
- The *Citizen's Plan* was not fully supported, however the "urban boulevard" concept was highly favored,
- One of the region's Transportation Improvement Program projects which the *Plan* identified as a priority were Route 148 (Walnut Street) and Route 48: Right-of-way, capacity, and intersection studies from Lysle Boulevard to the Boston Bridge in McKeesport;
- A secondary transportation project for McKeesport identified in the *Plan* include was Lysle Boulevard – Improve intersections from the Youghiogheny River to Mansfield Bridge along with improving building facades;
- There are special concerns for retaining and improving transit service

At the time of the *Plan*, the median household income in McKeesport was \$23,715, which is less than 80% of the state median. The most promising source of new jobs was cited as UPMC McKeesport.

## **2008 – The Avenues Beyond The Waterfront**

Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center/Carnegie Mellon University

In May 2008, the Western Pennsylvania Brownfields Center at Carnegie Mellon University facilitated a workshop, “The Avenues Beyond the Waterfront,” in collaboration with Homestead and West Homestead. *The Avenues* workshop considered the redevelopment opportunities and challenges facing a five-block stretch of Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Avenues between McClure and Neel Streets as well as two large properties (WHEMCO and ASKO) along West Seventh Avenue. Additionally, the workshop was convened to address the question of how businesses along Sixth and Seventh avenues could leverage The Waterfront located just across the railroad tracks from these streets. As the Waterfront flourishes economically, *The Avenues*, which were once the core economic engine for the communities, continue to suffer, resulting in blight, transient residents, and a lack of sharing in wealth from The Waterfront. Among the recommendations relevant to the H2M corridor are:

### Short Term

- Create standards for signage, lighting, streets paving, sidewalks, and fencing
- Develop a “Gateway Plan” with an “historic” theme
- Create a network of new and existing public activity places
- Connect community to The Waterfront and bike path

### Long Term

- Develop strategy to improve ramp access between town and The Waterfront
- Investigate other alternatives to providing Waterfront access

## **2008 – Mon Valley Land Use and Transportation**

10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania and Citizens for Pennsylvania’s Future (PennFuture)

To promote discussion about public investment priorities for the Monongahela Valley, PennFuture, with support from the Surdna Foundation, commissioned the publication of a resource guide for community and municipal leaders, *Mon Valley Land Use and Transportation: A Resource to Support Multi-Municipal Planning*. This guide provides an overview of past studies and major transportation recommendations in the Monongahela Valley and information about resources and technical assistance to support multi-municipal planning.

Upon completion of this document, PennFuture and 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania co-sponsored a series of regional workshops to set a course for future community-based multi-municipal planning in the Monongahela Valley. Three workshops, each focusing on specific Monongahela Valley corridors, were held during the week of October 20, 2008. The workshops were held in West Homestead, Braddock, and West Mifflin (a fourth workshop for McKeesport was not convened due to insufficient interest). The Route 837 corridor was discussed at the West Mifflin Workshop.

### Most Pressing Needs/Concerns

- Intermodality of transportation options has not been adequately examined or developed

- There are very few north-south connections available for Monongahela Valley residents. State routes are heavily congested due to the many people driving out of their way to get around the City of Pittsburgh.
- Inability/difficulty in getting people and freight into and out of development sites inhibits investment. Better access is crucial to attracting new employers.
- Competing demands for transit make cutting/modifying services very difficult, even though congestion requires that a focus on enhancing transit and transit-oriented development in order to catalyze regional revitalization
- New limited access highways would cut through residential areas. Should streetscape beautification be considered with traffic light sequencing to move traffic along existing roads?
- County and state roads need improvement. Without better connections between municipalities via these roads, inter-municipal collaboration can be more difficult.
- Existing roadways are insufficient, particularly for businesses (especially with regards to ingress and egress at brownfield redevelopment sites).

### Opportunities

- Integrate The Waterfront with West Homestead, Homestead, and Munhall (Sixth – Eighth Avenues) and improve the Seventh – Eighth avenues entry to Homestead from The Waterfront to encourage business investment in Homestead
- Improve Streets Run or Route 885 for The Waterfront
- Support completion of the Greater Allegheny Passage Trail
- Create pedestrian or bicycle commuting access on Route 837 in Duquesne
- Focus development in Duquesne and across the Monongahela Valley on moving people and materials/Improve transportation connections and access to brownfield sites, both for people and goods and freight
- Create a transit connection between Hazelwood to Homestead
- Create roadway improvements such as an urban boulevard and roadway beautification efforts
- Create more direct connections
- Add light rail to connect the Carrie Furnace site, Homestead, and Duquesne to Oakland and Downtown, which will increase development. People will be able to get to development sites, and residential development in the Monongahela Valley will become more attractive.
- Learn from the Centre Region Council of Governments model, which involves five communities sharing public transit, parks, planning, and code enforcement
- Do more Crawford Square (Hill District) type of development. Create mixed neighborhoods that include stand alone, duplex and row housing which is affordable.
- At the County level, think regionally, instead of focusing only on how local development benefits the Monongahela Valley

### Priorities and Rudimentary Plans

- Build upon the successes of The Waterfront to catalyze development in surrounding communities, encourage the continued involvement of community groups, and consider the “next big bang” and spillover market opportunities.
  - Create master plan that offers incentives to outside developers
  - Increase Main Street development in Homestead
- Improve transportation connections (which would lead to housing development) through:

- Create a light rail transit link from the Pittsburgh through Oakland, to the Carrie Furnace and the Monongahela Valley.
- Build the Mon-Fayette Expressway to 51 and extend light rail from Pittsburgh into the Monongahela Valley.
- Get the Allegheny Conference and elected officials (i.e. Senators Casey and Specter) to endorse plans and priorities.

## 2010 – Active Allegheny

Allegheny County Economic Development

*Active Allegheny* was an Allegheny County initiative to advance active transportation identified in the County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (*Allegheny Places*). The purpose was to integrate "healthy travel modes into existing transportation systems." The plan proposed bicycle routes, bicycle facilities, pedestrian improvements (including accessibility for persons with disabilities), other non-motorized transportation (kayak, skateboard), complete streets and an implementation plan. The plan is a resource guide to assist in implementation, i.e. tool kit, model ordinances, etc.

For the H2M Corridor, *Active Allegheny* proposed projects in the following places:

**Duquesne:** Route 837 (for pedestrians and transit users)

**Homestead:** Route 837 and Amity Street (for pedestrians)

*Active Allegheny's* proposed Route S3 passes through West Homestead, Homestead, Munhall, Whitaker, West Mifflin, Duquesne, and McKeesport. S4's alignment is the same as the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail. The proposed Route S3 also links McKeesport with Versailles and Elizabeth (included in a current segment of the GAP trail).

Among attractions in the H2M corridor, the following are desired access points for bicyclists:

- Kennywood Park – East End
- The Waterfront – Sand Castle/South Side Trail (Incorporated into the GAP trail)
- GAP trail – Glenwood Bridge, Rankin Bridge

A field view of Allegheny County roads noted the following:

### Route 837 in Duquesne:

- The Steel Valley Trail (now part of the GAP trail) along the northbound side
- A sidewalk along the southbound side
- Faded crosswalks at Grant Avenue

### Route 837 at Amity Street in Homestead:

- Signalized intersection
- Faded crosswalks
- Curbs not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Pedestrian activity
- At-grade railroad crossings with heavy railroad activity near the intersection

Pedestrian crash locations for 2005 – 2009 were identified throughout the H2M corridor with clusters along Route 837 in Homestead and West Mifflin and along Route 148 in McKeesport.

## **2010 – McKeesport Plan, Step V, Early Intervention Program - EIP Management Plan**

City of McKeesport

Step V of the Early Intervention Plan was structured to identify the City of McKeesport's top five financial and management priorities. Additional prioritization is to be conducted at the departmental level. Interdepartmental objectives that are City-wide or county-wide in nature are detailed in the Plan. Each objective is to contain a detailed action plan that describes (1) what is to be achieved, (2) the budgetary impact, (3) the timing and deadlines for each action step, and (4) which employee or agency has the primary responsibility for the objective.

The Plan recommends "Providing a logical and effective replacement and upgrade of major infrastructure systems" and commits the City to "continuously support transportation services for elderly and disabled McKeesport residents."

## **2013 – Great Allegheny Passage**

In 1978 the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy handed the deed for 26.75 miles of the Western Maryland Railway's abandoned corridor to the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks. The first section of what would become the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail was laid down between Ohiopyle and Confluence. Over the next 35 years, similar segments of trail were constructed, including sections in West Homestead, Homestead, Munhall, Whitaker, West Mifflin, Duquesne, and McKeesport. The Allegheny Trail Alliance, now known as the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, took a coordinating and fundraising role to renovate and convert iconic former railroad structures and to complete missing links in what would become the GAP.



Great Allegheny Passage Trail Bridge in Whitaker  
Source: Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy

The last section of the trail to be developed was in segment in West Homestead when Sandcastle, CSX Railroad, and Allegheny County finally agreed on an easement that would allow the GAP trail to pass through the water park's property.

The GAP trail, which was completed in 2013, is a very important regional non-road transportation investment in the H2M corridor.

## 2014 – Mon Valley Places

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission

In 2012-13, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) investigated opportunities for potential future enhanced transit corridors in the Monongahela Valley. For this study, SPC set out to create a set of concepts that could inspire future community leaders with ideas for innovative transit service and supportive station area plans that could lead to more sustainable communities. Two of the five communities evaluated in detail (and the locations for workshops) were in the H2M corridor:

- Homestead Borough: Amity Street and 8th Avenue near the Waterfront
- City of McKeesport: UPMC McKeesport

Under this effort previous plans and studies of the Mon Valley corridor were reviewed. In summary, they recommended the following actions:

- Improve connections between Mon Valley communities and key employment centers
- Improve transit options
- Provide pedestrian links and amenities
- Transition underutilized properties to new uses
- Add open space and connections to the river
- Create vibrant centers and gathering places along the corridor

The City of McKeesport has experienced a dramatic decline in public transportation options (i.e., loss of commuter rail and major bus service reductions) over the years, and public transit as a viable transportation mode in McKeesport was ranked behind driving and walking.

The poor condition of sidewalks was revealed to be a primary concern for many McKeesport participants. Bridge maintenance and pedestrian crosswalks and signals, and enhanced roadway capacity and maneuverability were ranked among the highest priorities for improvements. The McKeesport workshop also provided a good opportunity to highlight the McKeesport's TOD potential using SPC's Future Investments in TOD (FIT) model. The FIT tool gauges the potential strengths and weaknesses of a specific project location.

Workshop participants in Homestead cited sidewalk improvements as a top priority including general sidewalk repairs, accessible curb cuts, and overall sidewalk widening. With an interest in stormwater management strategies, participants identified the installation of rain gardens as another important pedestrian environment component. Additionally, decorative street lighting could enhance the community's ambience and safety.

Making the connection between pedestrians and drivers, workshop participants said they would like to see enhancements made to both street crosswalks and signals. The workshop attendees also indicated a need for greater roadway capacity and maneuverability. Other transportation infrastructure needs suggested were new traffic signals, visible pavement markings, improved street lighting, and increased on-street parking.

From a public transportation perspective, well-designed and state-of-the-art heated bus shelters, along with real-time vehicle arrival signs, are also desired amenities for Homestead's transit infrastructure.

For Homestead and McKeesport, *Mon Valley Places* proposes sets of prototypes for improving the transit experience and improving pedestrian mobility.

*Mon Valley Places* also proposed a service concept to improve connections from McKeesport to other key destinations in the region. The SR51 Community Shuttle Concept would link McKeesport to Clairton as well as Century III, Jefferson Hospital, and Community College of Allegheny County South. The US30 Community Shuttle Concept would link to employment and transit nodes in Turtle Creek and North Versailles, providing better connections to other destinations such as Monroeville. The 60+ Community Shuttle Concept would provide better access to the UPMC McKeesport TOD site for many McKeesport residents and would also provide a connection to the transit node at the Olympia Shopping Center. The P7+ Main Line Concept would improve McKeesport's access to downtown Pittsburgh and Oakland.

This plan recommends reinstating the 50B, Glassport – Clairton route which served McKeesport.



Existing and proposed bus stop for Duquesne

## 2015 – Joint Comprehensive Plan for the Cities of Duquesne & McKeesport

### Cities of Duquesne & McKeesport

Allegheny County's comprehensive plan, *Allegheny Places*, identifies Duquesne as a Community Downtown and McKeesport as an Urban Neighborhood. Through decades of change, Duquesne and McKeesport have retained a unique character, which they can build upon and leverage to realize future success. Each city has continued to be a community with an accessible central core of commercial and community services, residential units, and recognizable natural and built landmarks and boundaries that provide a sense of place and orientation.

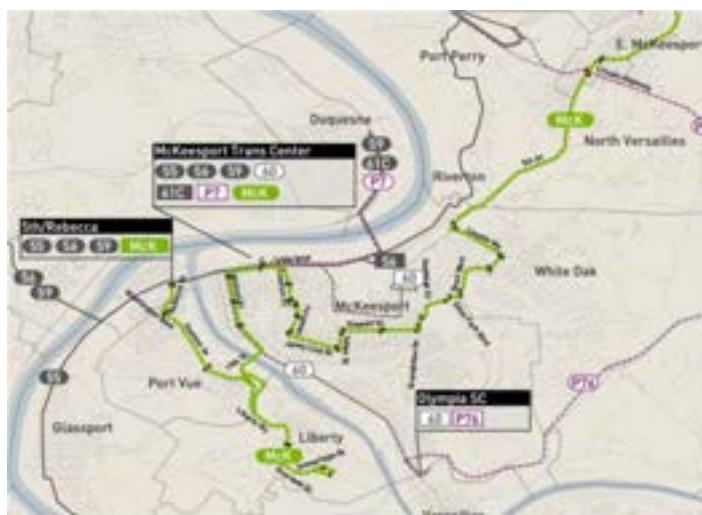
The two communities continued together to comprise a regional hub in the Monongahela Valley. The GAP trail passes through both cities. McKeesport is turning its focus to the river for recreation and potential development, as well as continued growth on the industrial areas. Duquesne has one of the last remaining viable and developable industrial river shipping ports.

#### Survey Question #2: Which of These Are Most Important to You and Your Family?

- Public Transportation: 18.8% in McKeesport, 16.7% in Duquesne
- Sidewalks and/or bike lanes: 19.1% in McKeesport, 8.3% in Duquesne
- Traffic congestion: 8.2% in McKeesport, 0.0% in Duquesne

RIDC is the largest owner of developable commercial/industrial land in the cities of McKeesport and Duquesne and controls most riverfront property on the Monongahela River in each city. Because of the high visibility of the sites, lack of robust development activity and vast land area, there has been frustration from the communities because of a perception that activity on the sites is stagnant.

In recent years, Duquesne and McKeesport have experienced severe service cuts in Port Authority transit service. Heritage Community Initiative transit service has reinstated some connections, especially in McKeesport, to get residents to main bus routes. Discussions with Port Authority indicate that service levels were continuously being analyzed and reconsidered. Representatives emphasized the importance of sharing data and planning efforts to ensure that the Port Authority has up-to-date information.



This *Plan* recommends continuing to advocate for public transportation and remaining in contact with PRT and Heritage Community Initiatives.

#### Regional and Recreation Assets

The GAP trail which passes through both Duquesne and McKeesport along the RIDC properties has been experiencing increased usage as additional portions are completed and local interest grows. There are opportunities in both cities to focus some improvements and investments in an effort to bring trail users into the communities.

In Duquesne, the GAP trail has key intersection with Grant Street, the City's original commercial Main Street. The intersection of Grant Avenue and Duquesne Boulevard (Route 837) serves as a nexus between the downtown and the Duquesne RIDC site and the GAP trail crossing. Enhanced services along Grant Avenue may potentially capture this important pool of visitors traveling through the City along the trail.

One of Duquesne's best retail opportunities was Duquesne Plaza due to its location and visibility. Since investments have been made to the shopping center in recent years, retail space has become limited if not unavailable. However, there has been developable land adjacent to the center, which would allow for expansion to include additional retailers. This *Plan* recommends preparing a preliminary plan for a flyover to connect the GAP trail and Grant Avenue.



Rendering of Flyover Bridge over Route 837 and Norfolk Southern at Grant Street in Duquesne

The GAP trail system also has pivotal points of intersection in McKeesport. Enhanced services and development within the RIDC McKeesport site may potentially help capture this important pool of visitors traveling through McKeesport. The *Plan* recommends making stronger connections to the GAP on the existing community road network. It identifies crosswalks as key; as are signage and attractive, safe places to park bikes. For McKeesport, the *Plan* identified Lysle Boulevard designated as a "Vehicle-Oriented Commercial Corridor.

The *Plan* recommended broadening the range of allowable uses designated in both cities' ordinances related to RIDC Properties.

Also relevant to the H2M project are the *Plan's* sections on Urban Neighborhoods, Community Downtowns, Transit-Oriented Development, Infill Areas, and Traditional Neighborhood Development.

% of occupied housing units with no vehicle availability (2010)

- Allegheny County – 15%
- City of Duquesne – 45%
- City of McKeesport – 30%

## **2015 - Munhall Borough Five Year Capital Improvement Plan, 2016 - 2020**

Munhall Borough

A statement of Conditions and Assumptions included demographic forecasts. Population decreased 7.4% from 2000 to 2013, but number of households remained relatively constant between 2009 and 2013. Population was expected to continue to decline, but the number of households would remain about the same.

There are 54.89 miles of roads in the Borough. The Borough would have limited funds to address capital needs.

## **2016 - Waterfront Access Traffic Study Report**

Allegheny County Department of Public Works

Allegheny County evaluated access to The Waterfront from the Homestead Grays Bridge, Amity Street, and Route 837 in Homestead Borough, West Homestead Borough, and Munhall Borough. The study evaluated 14 intersections along East Eighth Avenue and other streets in, next to, and near The Waterfront in the three boroughs. The access roadways to the Waterfront exceed capacity which is evident by:

- Amity Street northbound entering The Waterfront experienced vehicular queues extending from the East Fifth Avenue Ramp to Route 837
- Seventh Avenue eastbound experienced frequent traffic queues from Amity Street to Hays Street
- Vehicular queues on Amity Street and Seventh Avenue worsen when trains cross Amity Street. Approximately 83 Norfolk Southern and 30 CSX trains passed through this area daily. The trains essentially shut down Amity Street for a few minutes each time a train passed through.
- The at-grade train crossings create vehicular queues on Amity Street southbound leaving the Waterfront Development, which extend back to Waterfront Drive for vehicles heading south, thus restricting access to the East Fifth Avenue Ramp and to the Homestead Grays Bridge for vehicles heading north. This leaves the only other available external full access point at the intersection of East Waterfront Drive with Route 837.

According to PennDOT District 11 Route 837 crash data for the period between January 1, 2010 and December 31, 2014, there were a total of 40 crashes reported for the study intersections as follows:

- Route 837 (Eighth Avenue) and East Waterfront Drive – 13 crashes

- Route 837 (Eighth Avenue) and Amity Street – 8 crashes
- Route 837 (Eighth Avenue) and Homestead Grays Bridge/West Street – 7 crashes
- Route 837 (Eighth Avenue/Seventh Avenue) and Seventh Avenue/Eighth Avenue – 12 crashes

Of the 40 crashes that occurred at these intersections, 40% of the crashes were rear end collisions and 25% of the crashes were angle type collisions. These types of collisions are often associated with congested travel areas. 76% of crashes occurred on dry roads during daylight hours on clear days.

Intersections anticipated to have an unacceptable performance delay include:

- Homestead Grays Bridge and Fifth Avenue
- Route 837 (Eighth Avenue) and Homestead Grays Bridge/West Street
- Route 837 (Seventh Avenue/Eighth Avenue) and Seventh Avenue/Eighth Avenue

Two major building alternatives were evaluated to address traffic congestion and delays.

Alternative 1 would provide bi-directional traffic on the East Fifth Avenue Ramp. The proposed widening of the existing East Fifth Avenue Ramp would consist of providing an additional 12' lane. The widening would occur along the south side of the ramp. The sidewalk would be reconstructed on the outside of the new 12' lane and will be tied into the existing sidewalks at the top and bottom of the ramp. The cost estimate for Alternative 1 was \$2,415,000.

Alternative 2 would provide a West “Flyover” Bridge for a new access point to The Waterfront. The proposed West Flyover Bridge would consist of a bridge and retained embankment. The proposed bridge section would begin with a concrete abutment adjacent to the existing shoulder of Route 837 and span across the three Norfolk Southern (NS) railroad tracks, the WHEMCO Steel Castings, Inc's property, CSX's two railroad tracks, and the Sandcastle property. Approximately 10 spans would be anticipated.

The widest bridge section would occur at the beginning of the bridge with a total width of 51'-6." The bridge width will then taper down to two-lanes for a total width of 39.' The critical span for the bridge will be for the vertical clearance over the three NS railroad tracks. The bridge's profile would have to make an immediate climb from Route 837 at a 10.5% grade to achieve the required vertical clearance of 23'-0" over the railroad. The bridge would continue from Route 837, bend horizontally around the corner of the WHEMCO building and over the CSX tracks, and will parallel the existing Sandcastle Drive. The bridge would consist of straight and curved sections. The total bridge length would be approximately 1,110' long. The sidewalk will separate from the proposed roadway at the transition between bridge and retained embankment sections, and would cross over the proposed Sandcastle Drive in order to get pedestrians to ground level. The cost estimate for Alternative 2 was \$18,472,500.

#### Additional Improvements

Two additional independent improvements, a railroad advance warning system and reversible lanes on Homestead Grays Bridge, were evaluated. The cost estimate for this improvement was \$112,500.

Installing reversible lanes on the Homestead Grays Bridge between Fifth Avenue and Route 837 would provide three lanes southbound during the weekday afternoon peak period with one northbound lane. Preliminary analyses confirmed that this configuration would improve operations and reduce vehicular queues on the Homestead Grays Bridge as well as improving the overall level of service and decreasing

delay for the intersections of the bridge with Fifth Avenue and Eighth Avenue. There would be no advantage to implementing reverse lanes during the weekday morning and Saturday midday peak hours. Reversible lanes on the Homestead Grays Bridge could be implemented independently of the alternatives or concurrently with Alternative 2 but it is not compatible with Alternative 1. The cost estimate for reversible lanes on the Homestead Grays Bridge was \$261,250.

Both alternatives would address the primary objectives of improving operations, decreasing overall delay of the network, and providing additional access to by-pass the Amity Street railroad crossing to limit the impact of train operations and reduce the impacts if the at-grade crossing became obstructed.

## **2020 Beyond the East Busway: A transit vision for Pittsburgh's Mon Valley and Eastern Suburbs**

Pittsburghers for Public Transit

This study, a part of the Pittsburghers for Public Transit (PPT) "Beyond the East Busway" survey and campaign, was undertaken to propose lower cost options than those evaluated in the 2017 East Busway Extension Feasibility Study for improving transit service to the Mon Valley, Monroeville, and Eastern suburbs, including McKeesport. Transit improvement needs were identified by integrating demographic analysis with the survey results.

The *Beyond the East Busway* study specifically looked for solutions that could provide better service to more users, provide better service in a more timely manner, and be implemented on a cost-effective basis without a physical extension of the East Busway right-of-way. The rider-led approach involved participants who lived in the study area who reflected the area's demographics. During the study period, 529 people from 103 neighborhoods and municipalities in the study area participated; 80% of whom use transit daily. The rider-led solution proposed:

- Improvements that can be made to priority corridors connecting significant destinations throughout the Monongahela Valley and Eastern suburbs
- Prioritized investment near locations that are important to riders
- Solutions that can be implemented quickly at moderate to low cost

### Step 1: Create Transit Corridors which would

- Identify specific signals and points of congestion where transit operations are slowed
- Formulate an incremental strategy for implementation of bus-only lanes and signals

### Step 2: Enhance Operations

- Create or adapt bus routes for fast and frequent service along priority corridors
- Make adjustments to routes in Key Corridors to make transfers intuitive and useful
- Look for efficiencies that can enable even more fast and frequent service throughout the region

### Step 3: Improve Rider Facilities in Key Corridors

- Build new bus shelters, benches, wayfinding signage, and other amenities
- Improve sidewalks, crosswalks, and bicycle infrastructure in the areas surrounding Key Corridors

### Step 4: Build Transit-Oriented Communities in Key Corridors

- Encourage new investments to be made within walking distance to a transit route

- Encourage businesses to improve their connections to transit stops
- Update zoning and subdivision ordinances to enable diverse and affordable development near public transit.

PPT stated the project was needed because:

- Industrial collapse lead to community disinvestment including transit
- Massive service cuts in 2007 and 2011 isolated residents in the region
- Low-income, black, and brown residents in the Eastern part of the county were hit hardest
- There was excitement when the Port Authority announced a new Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) plan, with hopes that this could solve long-term issues but, the new plan proposed reducing service,
- Communities organized, built a movement, and eventually overturned this proposal in 2018
- The BRT project as revised would benefit eastern communities
- But the BRT routes would not extend far enough into the East Suburbs and Monongahela Valley. In 2018 residents launched the Riders Vision for Public Transit which called for an extension of the East Busway's benefits to McKeesport, Monroeville, and other eastern suburban communities

Only a small proportion of the Monongahela Valley and Eastern Suburbs lie within Port Authority's frequent transit walkshed resulting in long commute and wait times for many residents. For example, McKeesport residents commuting to work on public transit spend twice as much time as those commuting in private vehicles to reach their workplaces. Moreover, residents often have to transfer to reach their destinations, forcing them to spend additional time and money, which is more acute for those paying cash fares. Port Authority's hub and spoke network has often required traveling to Downtown Pittsburgh to transfer to another route, which considerably adds to transit travel times.

Moreover, few of these communities have been covered by the frequent service walkshed. Accordingly, those seeking to use these services would either have to walk or use local routes to connect to a frequent service. These local routes are often infrequent, adding to travel times. Additionally, the location of bus stops, the existence of bus shelters, and conditions of the sidewalks have also affected the ability to use transit. For elderly persons and persons with disabilities, a severe lack of safe crosswalks and sidewalks can make it difficult and dangerous to access transit. For those who must transfer between routes, the absence of bus shelters can mean waiting in inclement weather. A combination of these factors can result in delayed or missed appointments, fewer job opportunities, and reduced social networks and support.

The passage of Pennsylvania Act 89, allowed the Heritage Community Initiatives to relaunch the service previously reduced in the Monongahela Valley. In its present iteration, Heritage Community Initiatives serves Monongahela Valley residents with three fixed route services that connect with the Port Authority routes. With Act 89 expiring, this service could potentially face cuts again.

The Monongahela Valley via Homestead (61C Corridor) corridor is one of the top three corridors by number of survey responses.

The report recommended the following actions relevant to the H2M corridor:

#### Service Changes

- Add off-peak and weekend service on the P7 and re-route entirely on the East Busway. Since the P7 currently only operates during peak hours, this would add fast and frequent service all day and on weekends of 40 minutes headway between McKeesport and Downtown. For an increase of

\$459,000 in operations and maintenance costs, 980 daily trips or 294,000 annual trips could be added.

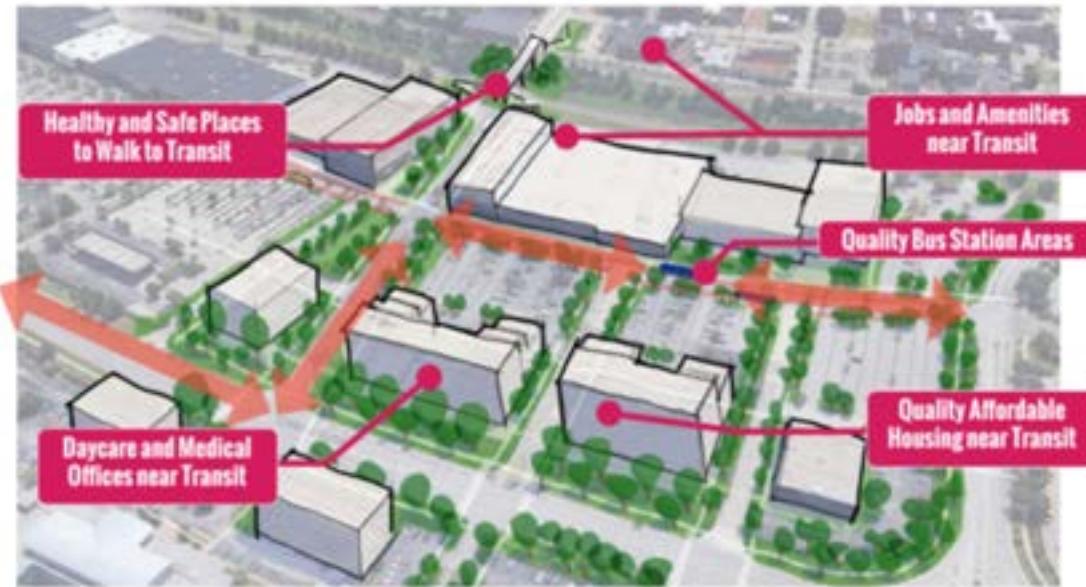
- Extend the 71 to The Waterfront. To strengthen the 71 route by adding additional stops and increased connectivity to riders could cost \$403,900 in annual operations & maintenance costs, while adding 449 additional daily trips or 164,000 additional annual weekday and weekend trips.

#### On-Street Improvements

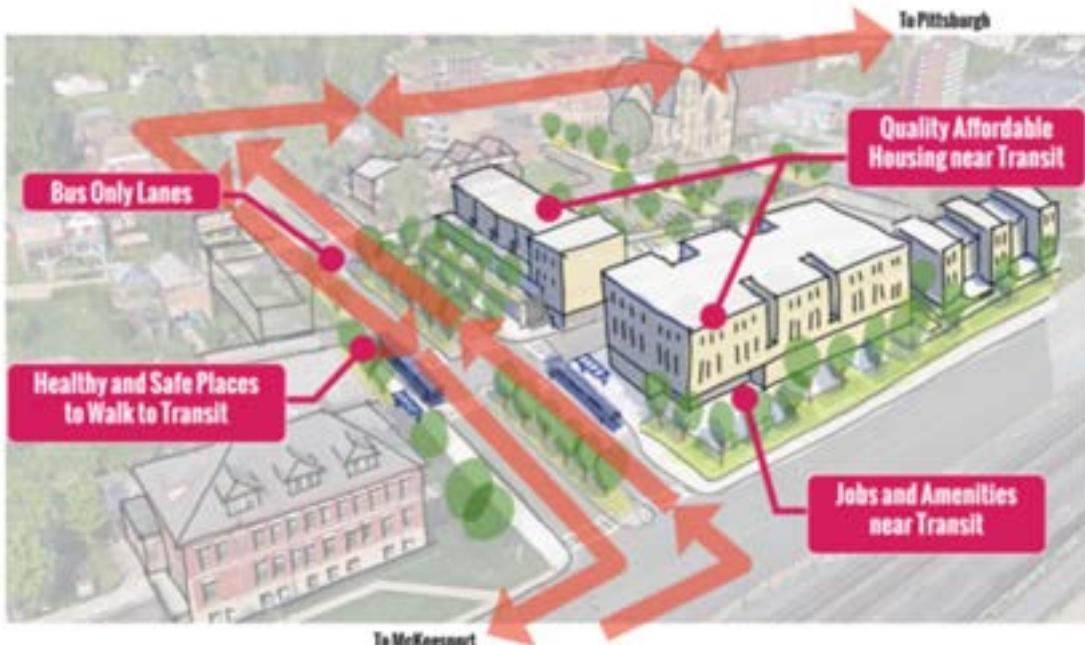
- Commission a study of Transit Signal Priority (TSP) throughout the *Beyond the Busway* area.
- Implement dedicated bus lanes. Among the candidate roads to be investigated is East Eighth Avenue in Homestead, where up to half a minute per trip could be saved on the 61C, 53, and 52L routes. Additional bus lanes may be identified through congestion analysis could be a component of a TSP implementation study.
- Develop an equitable, far-reaching off-board fare collection system. Issues of concern include access for low-income, cash-paying riders, and a non-criminal enforcement system.
- Combine on-street improvements to achieve BRT-style transit. The study found that a reduction of peak vehicles (large annual cost-savings and additional systemic capacity) could be achieved by surpassing a trip speedup threshold.

#### Responding to COVID-19

- Conduct an equity and service analysis of disparate ridership and impacts caused by COVID-19. While this study was conducted prior to the onset of the global COVID-19 epidemic, the disparate impact on riders from the *Beyond the Busway* communities may be especially prominent. A rider-informed equity analyses should be conducted to understand the impacts of the pandemic and new service.



Transit Vision for The Waterfront



Transit Vision for Duquesne

## 2021 – Envision 2070: Mobility in a Sustainable Pittsburgh

City of Pittsburgh: Department of Mobility and Infrastructure

*Envision 2070* is a strategic plan that focuses on meeting future mobility challenges, addressing current discrepancies, and sustaining past investment in the mobility infrastructure in the City of Pittsburgh. Prepared in September 2021, this is a long-range vision to connect the people and neighborhoods of Pittsburgh with each other, the region, and the world. This plan aims to address the physical mobility needs of different users to help them achieve economic mobility. Large-scale long-term change is broken down into small achievable steps including specific projects, policy, and process recommendations.

The organization of the plan is based on projects that focus on Connecting to the World, to the region, to centers, with Districts, and managing the Street; the plan proposes rapid transit (mode and station locations not specified) along Route 837.

## 2022 – FY 2022 Annual Action Plan – City of McKeesport

The City of McKeesport is required to complete an annual application for the use of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The *Annual Action Plan* is a guide for the City to allocate its resources for specific activities that support the Goals and Strategies of the City of McKeesport's Five Year Consolidated Plan. The Five-Year Plan describes the housing and non-housing needs of City residents and presents a five-year strategy to address those needs. A recommendation relevant to the H2M corridor is:

"Improve the City's infrastructure through rehabilitation, reconstruction, and new construction of streets, sidewalks, slopes, curbs, handicap accessibility improvements, sewer, water, storm water management, bridges, green infrastructure, the purchase of equipment, handicap accessibility improvements/removal of architectural barriers, etc."

## 2022 Walk Bike Ride McKeesport

City of McKeesport

The City of McKeesport developed an active transportation plan emphasizing non-vehicle mobility for the City's residents. The plan's vision is for McKeesport to be a pedestrian-friendly city where walking and riding provide affordable, safe, and healthy mobility for all residents. New projects and programs will work to enhance the community and their mobility needs. The plan's principles are:

- People First - Strengthen accessibility, availability of public transit, and connectivity for people walking, biking, and rolling to their basic and essential needs (doctor appointments, grocery stores, social services, etc.) The end-users of this effort are the residents.
- The Car is Last – Create a network where residents in the community can live their everyday lives without a car via human-powered mobility (walking, biking, scooters, etc.)
- Equitable and Affordable – Build equity for all, regardless of ethnicity, race, age, class, language, and ability while reducing physical and mental barriers to community resources
- Interconnection – Develop an interconnected pedestrian and bicycle network, which provides safe routes from housing to public transportation (PRT and Heritage Community Initiatives), city parks, regional trails, social services, and other basic needs
- Health, Safety, and Wellness – Promote walking, biking, etc. within the City of McKeesport as a convenient and accessible option for transportation as well as recreation through providing safe connections to parks, trails, and other recreational opportunities
- Intuitive and Responsive – Provide a user-friendly and legible experience (for all modes of movement) that is clear and easy to understand, inclusive of transit stop 'branding,' signage, lighting, etc.

### Goal and Objectives

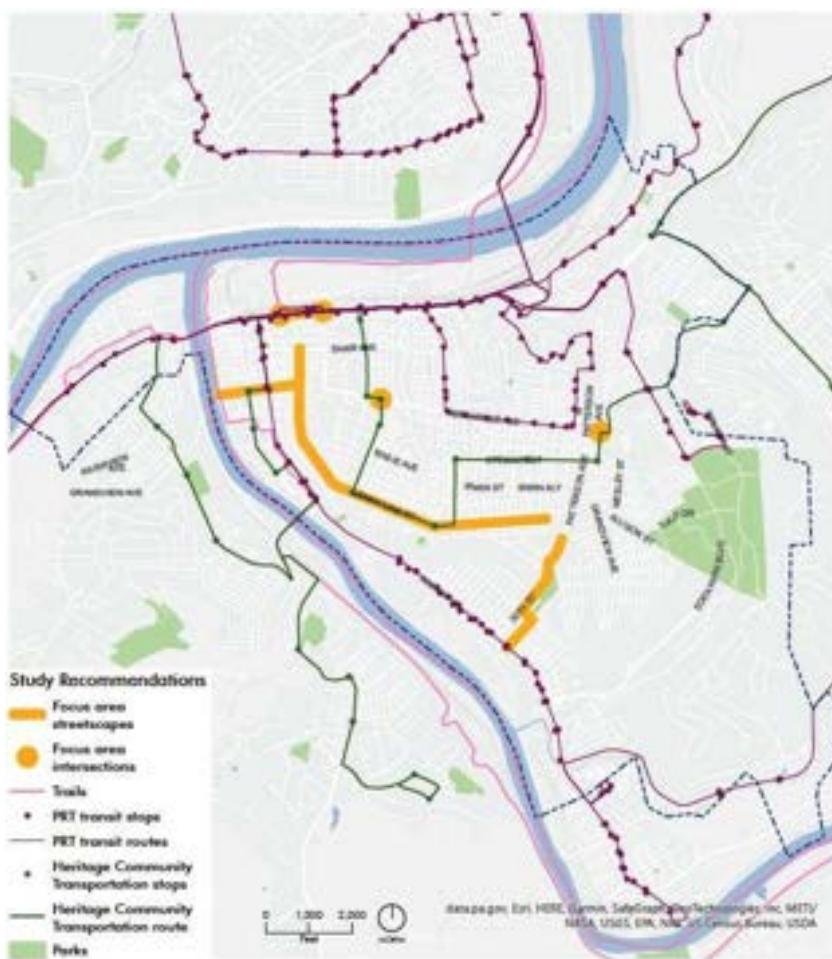
A goal of *Walk Bike Ride McKeesport* is increased access to neighborhood destinations such as libraries, schools, parks, and bus stops, and access to regional amenities such as the McKeesport Transit Center and the GAP trail. Included in the objectives are the following:

- Support and collaborate with public transit services
  - Design bikeways and pedestrian connections that provide first and last mile connections to transit,
  - Collaborate with PRT to increase transit coverage in McKeesport to meet the city's needs (McKeesport's propensity score in *NEXTransit* is 1.00),
  - Install more secure, long-term bicycle parking at the McKeesport Transportation Center,
  - Encourage further coordination between PRT and the Heritage Community Transportation service to provide cohesive connections throughout the City,
  - Coordinate with PRT to further consider the McKeesport Community Circulator as proposed in *NEXTransit*, and
  - Participate in the H2M corridor planning project for pedestrian and transit improvements along Lysle Boulevard.

Areas along the river tend to have the highest proportions of persons with disabilities. This area includes the Lysle Boulevard corridor, which is accessible by multiple transit routes. Downtown McKeesport and the river corridor areas house the highest percentage of no-vehicle households. No-vehicle households tend to reside in areas served by multiple transit routes (i.e. Lysle Boulevard corridor). McKeesport's overall percentage of households without automobiles is 30.4%, well above the percentage for Allegheny County.

For Lysle Boulevard, the plan recommends:

- Improve sidewalk condition, connectivity, and accessibility
- Consider sidewalk railings or other safety measures along Lysle Boulevard near the McKeesport Transportation Center to prevent dangerous mid-block crossings
- Evaluate city-wide wayfinding signage and consider focused improvements at city gateway/entrance locations
- Enhance streetscape with landscaping (coupled with stormwater management), tree plantings, street lighting, seating, litter receptacles, etc.
- Collaborate with PRT on pedestrian crossing improvements



Map of *Walk Bike Ride McKeesport Recommended Improvements*

Throughout the project process, the McKeesport Transportation Center was under construction and successfully completed. While the entire Lysle Boulevard corridor is a priority to improve for pedestrian and bicyclist safety, there is a focus on the intersections around the Transit Center because it is a high-traffic area for pedestrians. Proposed improvements include sidewalk railings to prevent mid-block crossings or an alternative safety measure such as additional signage.

## **2023 Act 47 Exit Plan**

City of Duquesne (initially submitted 2019, updated for 2023)

The City of Duquesne was declared financially distressed in 1991 under Act 47 of 1987, Pennsylvania's Municipalities Financial Recovery Act. As with many of the municipalities in the Pittsburgh Region, Duquesne suffered from the contraction of heavy industry, the outflow of residents from the City and the region, and the subsequent reduction in tax base. However, the City's need to provide police services, maintain roads, water and sewer lines, remove snow, and cut grass did not decrease. The result was a structural imbalance in the City's finances that could not be overcome by local cost cutting efforts alone. The City's first *Financial Recovery Plan* was issued and approved in 1991 with regular updates as necessary and in compliance with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Municipalities Financial Recovery Act.

The City of Duquesne has continued to struggle since the Commonwealth first declared it financially distressed. The City's population decreased from 8,568 residents in 1990 to 5,565 residents in 2010, a 35% decrease in only two decades. Those who moved from Duquesne often left buildings and properties, which soon decayed or became overgrown due to lack of maintenance. Industrial sites requiring environmental remediation provided a long-term challenge, but now stand ready for a new generation of commercial or industrial purposes. Each subsequent *Financial Recovery Plan* amendment provided guidance to the City's effort to improve the community and return to fiscal health.

The City's *Financial Recovery Plan* was last amended and approved in February 2014.

### Public Works – Streets Expenditures

Spending on street maintenance, grass cutting, snow removal, and securing blighted properties is the third largest area of expense in the City of Duquesne. These expenditures fell by \$51,131 from 2014 to 2017, largely due to lower administrative costs and reductions in snow removal spending.

The report states that The City shall contract for all road work projects other than general road cleaning, maintenance and repair; snow removal and ice control; building /property maintenance; and other minor maintenance activities. Further, the City shall contract for these and other related activities that may be warranted following the Intergovernmental Service Delivery Study. Five full-time public works employees handle the repair and maintenance of streets and roadways in Duquesne covering 1.8 square miles. There is an ongoing need to address problems associated with the City's aged infrastructure and the City's reduced ability to pay maintenance costs. The City must inventory of roads/streets/alleys and include information such as the type and size of road, condition of road, and its life cycle. All information should be incorporated into the City's capital improvement program.

The report states that the City shall provide special funding to provide local match to qualify for a variety of state and federal grant programs for development projects. The City shall capitalize a Matching Fund pool of \$1.5 million over the next three years. The report notes that the City has completed this initiative

and continues as grant funds demanding a match become available (e.g. Community Development Block Grant via Steel Rivers Council of Governments).

The report states that the City should consider pursuing an expansion to the commercial core by extending commercial land uses across Route 837 along Grant Avenue to the riverfront. This commercial corridor may serve the needs of other developments on the riverfront site, including industrial and flex/office users, and visitors to the riverfront. The City should begin to work with RIDC to coordinate this commercial development expansion potential.

Although the RIDC Duquesne City Center has been successfully developed under RIDC leadership, there are still opportunities for further development. The City shall seek to reengage with the RIDC to determine, clarify and proactively pursue additional development opportunities.

The report states that the City shall work with regional planning and transportation organizations including SPC, PennDOT, and the Turnpike Commission to prioritize traffic and transportation improvements in and around the City in order to maximize access and improved circulation. Key improvements shall include:

- The Mon-Fayette Expressway and Interchange
- A vehicular and pedestrian bridge fly-over to provide access and egress to the riverfront development site in order to avoid at-grade rail crossings.

The report states the City shall implement and fund an annual street resurfacing and preventive maintenance program as part of its capital improvement plan and notes that maintaining and improving the City's infrastructure is key to attracting businesses and residents to Duquesne.

The report states that the City shall work with RIDC to provide public access and passive recreational use of the riverfront, especially at the end of the Grant Avenue extension on the site of the former Duquesne Works. In conjunction with the RIDC, the City shall work with the Allegheny Trail Alliance and the Steel Industry Heritage Trail Council to ensure that the trail alignment extends from McKeesport across the river and permits access to the Duquesne riverfront.

## **2022 to present – Steel Valley Plan**

Boroughs of Homestead, Munhall, and West Homestead

This *Plan* has two major phases that will play out over a total 18-month timeline. The first involves listening to the community which will involve outreach to gather perspectives that will help define a set of key issues that are of primary importance to residents, property owners and other stakeholders. The next phase will involve proposing solutions, identifying preferred future scenarios and developing precise, realistic action plans to address key issues. The result will be a detailed set of strategies that will be of immediate use to staff, community leaders and partners who can help make the plan's vision come alive.

The planning process has identified connectivity as a key issue. The *Plan's* draft recommendations include the following:

### Recommendation 1: Resurrect the initiative to build a new West Bridge

Build political consensus and support for the construction of a bridge to connect Waterfront Drive to the intersection of PA Route 837 (7th Avenue) and 8th Avenue along the southwest side of the WHEMCO Steel Castings, Inc. plant over the Norfolk Southern and CSX railroad lines.

Recommendation 2: Broaden options for transit-dependent residents

- a. Arrange a conversation involving staff and officials from all three municipalities, along with multimodal staff at PennDOT, PRT, and Allegheny County to identify funding opportunities for a preliminary corridor concept plan with cost estimates for transit improvements on Eighth Avenue, and
- b. Create a corridor concept plan for Eighth Avenue that includes:
  - i. Improvements to transit stops along Eighth Avenue as proposed in PRT's H2M plan
  - ii. Upgraded traffic signals and crossing infrastructure at Eighth Avenue intersections to lengthen pedestrian crossing times and improve pedestrian safety
  - iii. Traffic priority for buses, in the form of queue jump intersection configuration and/or bus-only lanes along Eighth Avenue and the Homestead Grays Bridge
  - iv. Traffic calming design elements
  - v. Streetscaping, including tree pruning (and/or replacement as deemed appropriate), façade improvements and green infrastructure elements that enhance the pedestrian realm, such as bump-outs that improve intersection safety and capture stormwater
  - vi. Public art such as murals in public spaces that exemplify Steel Valley history and identity. Invite artists to create work celebrating the diverse heritage of these places

Recommendation 3: Improve pedestrian and bike links between the Waterfront and 8th Avenue, to Hazelwood and throughout the Steel Valley area

- a. Develop and implement a multi-municipal Active Transportation Plan based on the Connectivity Map included in this plan
- b. Each borough's planning commission should annually recommend priority projects from the Active Transportation Plan to their respective councils
- c. Plan and implement construction of approximately one mile of bike lane from Amity Street to Waterfront Drive (Homestead)
- d. Work with PennDOT to provide safe bike boxes and improve visibility at dangerous intersections

Recommendation 4: Improve wayfinding and signage throughout the three communities to improve public safety, navigation, and encourage foot traffic to the Avenue business districts

Recommendation 5: Increase options for travel to nearby communities

- a. Work with Rivers of Steel and management at the Waterfront and potentially Sandcastle to identify potential sites for a water taxi landing
- b. Encourage publicity and use of future amenities that will increase pedestrian and bike accessibility to Rankin, Carrie Furnace and the Westmoreland Heritage Trail via the conversion of the Rankin Hot Metal Bridge for pedestrian/cyclist use, and to Hazelwood via the addition of a pedestrian walkway to the Glenwood Bridge

<https://www.steelvalleyplan.com>